AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1 (original). A catalyst composition for the oxidation of ethane and/or ethylene to acetic acid, which composition comprises in combination with oxygen the elements molybdenum, vanadium, niobium and gold in the absence of palladium according to the empirical formula : $Mo_aW_bAu_cV_dNb_eY_f$(I),

wherein Y is one or more elements selected from the group consisting of : Cr, Mn, Ta, Ti, B, Al, Ga, In, Pt, Zn, Cd, Bi, Ce, Co, Rh, Ir, Cu, Ag, Fe, Ru, Os, K, Rb, Cs, Mg, Ca, Sr, Ba, Zr, Hf, Ni, P, Pb, Sb, Si, Sn, Tl, U, Re, Te and La; and

a, b, c, d, e and f represent the gram atom ratios of the elements such that :

$0 < a \leq 1$; $0 \leq b < 1$ and $a + b = 1$;

$10^{-5} < c \leq 0.02$;

$0.4 \leq d \leq 0.865$; $0.135 \leq e \leq 0.23$; and $0.55 \leq d + e \leq 1$; and

$0 \leq f \leq 2$.

2 (original). A catalyst composition as claimed in claim 1, selected from the group consisting of : $Mo_aW_bAu_cV_dNb_eY_f$, $Mo_a Au_cV_dNb_eY_f$, $Mo_aW_bAu_cV_dNb_e$ and $Mo_aAu_cV_dNb_e$.

3 (currently amended). A catalyst composition as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein $a > 0.01$, $0.0001 < c \leq 0.002$, $0.425 \leq d \leq 0.8$, $0.14 \leq e \leq 0.20$, $0.6 \leq d + e \leq 0.95$, and $f \leq 0.2$.

4 (original). A catalyst composition as claimed in claim 3, wherein $0.0005 < c \leq 0.001$, $0.45 \leq d \leq 0.7$, $e \geq 0.15$, $d + e \leq 0.9$, and $f \leq 0.02$.

5 (original). A catalyst composition as claimed in claim 4, wherein $d \geq 0.5$, $e \leq 0.18$, and $d + e \geq 0.7$.

6 (original). A catalyst composition as claimed in claim 5, wherein $d + e \geq 0.8$.

7 (currently amended). A catalyst composition as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1 or claim 2, wherein $a = 1$.

8 (currently amended). A catalyst composition as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1 or claim 2, wherein Y is selected from the group consisting of Sn, Sb, Cu, Pt, Ag, Fe and Re.

9 (original). A catalyst composition as claimed in claim 1 having the formula selected from the group consisting of: $Mo_{1.00}V_{0.455}Nb_{0.200}Au_{0.0008}O_y$; $Mo_{1.00}V_{0.547}Nb_{0.163}Au_{0.0009}O_y$ and $Mo_{1.000}V_{0.661}Nb_{0.174}Au_{0.0009}O_y$ wherein y is a number which satisfies the valencies of the elements in the composition for oxygen.

10 (currently amended). A process for the selective production of acetic acid from a gaseous mixture comprising ethane and/or ethylene which process comprises contacting the gaseous mixture with a molecular oxygen-containing gas at elevated temperature in the presence of a catalyst composition as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1.

11 (original). A process as claimed in claim 10 in which the catalyst is used in the form of a fluidized bed.